



(Photo: Red Maple/David N. Johnson)

## **FALL COLOR REPORT 10/6/16**

### **Northwest**

In Carroll County, the bottomland areas, especially along the Mississippi River corridor, are showing the best color change, with the silver maple turning yellow and red and cottonwood turning yellow. Walnuts are shedding their leaves fast as the little yellow leaflets "rain" across the road. Sumac and dogwoods are turning reds and purples in the roadside. Virginia creeper is red and looks like flames of fire climbing into the tree tops. The upland trees are showing signs of change now, and in another week or so could be peaking, depending on weather. Yellow goldenrod is in full bloom in the roadside, and the farmers are in the fields harvesting corn.

Quad Cities Area - Rock Island, Bureau, Henry, Mercer, Knox, and Stark Counties: Crops continue to ripen in the field and harvesting of corn and beans leave beige stubble on the ground. Most of the standing crops have lost their yellow and green colors and are mostly light brown. The combination of mowing and cooler temperatures has enhanced the growth of cool season grasses, keeping most roadsides green; goldenrod has lost its brilliance now that it has gone to seed. Sumac continues to show more scarlet colors, while the dogwoods maintain their grayish burgundy color. Green is still the dominant color of forest trees. Walnut continues to yellow and lose leaves; cottonwood is turning a

brownish green and losing leaves before they can turn yellow; ash is starting to show signs of yellow; other species may be getting more of a yellowish green.

### **Northeast**

Things are starting to happen for leaf watchers in NE Illinois, especially with sugar maples. They are starting to show light red, orange, and yellow. Silver maples are showing light yellow. Sumac is showing dark red leaves. The oaks and the hickories have yet to start turning.

In the forest, the cottonwood, elm, and walnut have lots of leaves on the ground. Oaks and hickory are just showing hints of color on leaf tips. Understory shrubs are showy: sumac, ivy, and understory trees are about half way there with good yellows (reds are moderate). Weekend temps will bring more color, and it is probably still 10 days out from Northern Illinois fall color peak. In urban areas, the maples (autumn blaze, Armstrong, Oct Glory) are showing about 35% reddish. Most of these are under stress from urban planting, but should really pop out next week with the weekend cool-down.

### **West Central**

Colors are slowly improving in west central Illinois. Sumacs and Virginia creeper are full scarlet. Walnut and cottonwood are turning yellow and dropping leaves. Some maples are starting to show a bit of color. Hickories are starting to brown. There's a lot of green out there, but some leaves are dropping and it sounds more like fall.

West Central Illinois/Great River Road from Alton to Eldred: The colors have just begun to change. The walnuts are brown and yellow, the dogwoods and sumacs have developed very nice reds and yellows. The sassafras are starting to show yellows, oranges and reds. The green ashes have started changing to yellow and the white ashes have nice reds and purples. The oaks are still largely green.

Color is starting to show pretty well around the Illinois River area of Cass, Schuyler and Mason counties, which will be good for the Spoon River Drive. Hackberry, walnut, sycamore and redbuds are turning yellow-green; sugar and silver maples are turning yellow. The oaks and hickories are not showing much color yet. Not much color is showing elsewhere in the west central area.

Pike, Adams, Scott, Calhoun, Brown, Jersey, Greene, and Macoupin counties: Cottonwood, sycamore, and walnut leaves are starting to brown/yellow and lose leaves. A small fraction of the mid-story sassafras and sugar maple are starting to turn (red/yellow). All other tree/brush species remain predominantly green and are maintaining their summer colors this week.

### **Central**

Some color is starting to poke out of the landscape. Leaves are starting to dry down on some species and so there is a mix of yellow and browns. Dogwoods, sumacs, poison ivy, and Virginia creeper are all giving good red to dark red color. Some sugar maples are getting some good yellows. Cottonwoods are dropping leaves, along with black walnut trees. The walnut leaves are still hanging like ornaments on some trees as they turn light green to yellow. Osage orange trees are loaded in some places with large

“hedge apples” that show up from quite a distance. Yellow goldenrod color is still quite plentiful in the open areas. The prairie grasses are turning slightly and will go even faster the next couple of weeks.

### **East Central**

East central Illinois is finally starting to see some fall color. White ash is beginning to show some purple and a few green ash have some yellow. More black walnuts are showing yellow as well. There is also a bit of red/scarlet from the poison ivy and Virginia creeper vines.

### **South**

Effingham and surrounding counties: Goldenrod dominates many prairie restorations, with some blue-purple asters in a few locations. Some sumac is getting a deep red color to it in the last few days. In disturbed timber, snakeroot is quite prevalent with white contrasting with mainly green understory. Virginia creeper has a deep burgundy color where present. Sassafras continues to show red orange and some yellow. Sweetgum is starting to turn dark purple, but not much yet. Walnuts are yellowing but dropping leaves just as fast. White ash trees are beginning to develop purple-orange variations. Green ash trees are just starting to yellow on healthy trees. Some red maples are just thinking of turning in yards.

Colors are moving toward fall in Wayne County, but slowly. Folks who know their trees will find little bits of joy out there. The red maples are just getting started, the green ash is beginning to yellow, and foresters this week saw the first purple on a white ash; not much, but it looks like good colors will be out there this fall, eventually.

In Clinton County, the sassafras are shifting more to fall colors, turning red. The sumac are starting to turn red. Several of sweet gums are just starting to turn yellow and red in parts of the trees.

Fall colors are just beginning in Randolph County. Dogwoods are turning red, as are sumacs and the ash trees are turning yellow. Peak color is still a ways off.

In Union County, many of the trees in low lying areas are starting to change. Sycamores are turning yellow/gold, sumac are turning red, maples are turning yellow, sassafras are turning purple or red, and tulip poplar just beginning to turn yellow.